



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

National Agricultural Statistics Service

Notice of Intent to Request Revision and Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the intention of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to request revision and extension of a currently approved information collection, the Cost of Pollination Survey. This survey gathers data related to the costs incurred by farmers to improve the pollination of their crops through the use of honey bees and other pollinators.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]** to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by docket number 0535-0258, by any of the following methods:

- E-mail: ombofficer@nass.usda.gov. Include docket number above in the subject line of the message.
- eFax: (855) 838-6382
- Mail: Mail any paper, disk, or CD-ROM submissions to: David Hancock, NASS Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5336 South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-2024.

- Hand Delivery/Courier: Hand deliver to: David Hancock, NASS
Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5336
South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C.
20250-2024.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kevin L. Barnes, Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, (202)720-2707. Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from David Hancock, NASS - OMB Clearance Officer, at (202)690-2388 or at ombofficer@nass.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Cost of Pollination Survey.

OMB Control Number: 0535-0258.

Type of Request: Intent to Seek Approval to Revise and Extend an Information Collection for 3 years.

Abstract: The primary objective of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is to prepare and issue state and national estimates of crop and livestock production, prices, and disposition; as well as economic statistics, environmental statistics related to agriculture, and also to conduct the Census of Agriculture. Pollinators (honey bees, bats, butterflies, hummingbirds, etc.) are vital to the agricultural industry for pollinating numerous food crops for the world's population. Concern for honey bee colony mortality has risen since the introduction of *Varroa* mites in the United States in the late 1980s and the appearance of Colony Collapse Disorder in the past decade.

In June 2014, the Obama Administration issued a Presidential Memorandum directing federal agencies to take steps to protect and restore domestic populations of pollinators. The memorandum established the Pollinator Health Task Force

(Task Force), which is co-chaired by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and includes leaders from 14 executive branch departments, agencies, and offices. The Task Force's plan involved conducting research and collecting data for the following categories: Status & Trends, Habitats, Nutrition, Pesticides, Native Plants, Collections, Genetics, Pathogens, Decision Tools, and Economics. The pollinators have been classified into Honey Bee, Native Bee, Wasp, Moth/Butterfly, Fly, and Vertebrate. The departments that conducted the bulk of the research were the Department of the Interior (DOI), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Smithsonian Institute (SI), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

NASS was given the tasks of collecting economic data related to honey bees and quantifying the number of colonies that were lost or reduced. NASS is approved to conduct the annual Bee and Honey Inquiry (operations with five or more colonies) and the quarterly Colony Loss Survey (operations with five or more colonies) under OMB # 0535-0153. In 2019, funding for the Cost of Pollination Survey were cut and the survey was suspended. Under the 2022 Senate Appropriations Bill, funding is provided for the reinstatement of the Cost of Pollination Survey. Provided the Bill is signed into law as written; NASS will resume data collection on this survey in 2022.

NASS will collect economic data from crop farmers who rely on pollinators for their crops (fruits, nuts, vegetables, etc.). Data relating to the targeted crops are collected for the total number of acres that rely on honey bee pollination, the number of honey bee colonies that were used on those acres, and any cash fees associated with honey bee pollination. Crop Farmers are also asked if beekeepers who were hired to bring their bees to their farm were notified of pesticides used on

the target acres, how many acres they were being hired to pollinate, and how much they were being paid to pollinate the targeted crops.

Authority: These data will be collected under the authority of 7 U.S.C. 2204(a). Individually identifiable data collected under this authority are governed by Section 1770 of the Food Security Act of 1985 as amended, 7 U.S.C. 2276, which requires USDA to afford strict confidentiality to non-aggregated data provided by respondents. This Notice is submitted in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-113) and the Office of Management and Budget regulations at 5 CFR part 1320. This survey is also conducted in accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2018, Title III of Pub. L. No. 115-435, codified in 44 U.S.C. Ch. 35.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response. Publicity materials and an instruction sheet for reporting via internet will account for 5 minutes of additional burden per respondent. Respondents who refuse to complete a survey will be allotted 2 minutes of burden per attempt to collect the data.

Once a year, NASS will contact approximately 18,000 crop farmers who rely on honey bees to pollinate their fruit, nut, vegetable, and other crops. NASS will conduct the annual survey using a mail and internet approach. This will be followed up with phone and personal enumeration for non-respondents. NASS will attempt to obtain at least an 80% response rate.

Respondents: Farmers

Estimated Number of Respondents: 18,000

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: With an estimated response rate of approximately 80%, we estimate the burden to be 5,340 hours.

COMMENTS: Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, technological, or other forms of information technology collection methods. All responses to this notice will become a matter of public record and be summarized in the request for OMB approval.

Signed at Washington, DC, September 17, 2021.

Kevin L. Barnes,

Associate Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2021-20856 Filed: 9/24/2021 8:45 am; Publication Date: 9/27/2021]